



BIA Fire Mentoring Program 2015 Success Story

In January, the BIA Prescribed Fire Mentoring Program at Seminole, Florida took place. The mentoring group, comprised of 10 participants and three field coordinators, practiced prescribed fire applications on designated treatment areas within the Seminole Tribe trust lands. During the training, students improved their firing skills and developed key teamwork and leadership development principles.



2015 Fire Mentoring Program participants – picture by Don Mitchell

Pictured left to right: Don Mitchell, Tad Lamere, Juan Eder, Dane Martin, Michael Lightsey, Kenny Burnette, Todd Bryning, Clint Desautel, Randy Pretty on Top, David Cline, Aubrey Aday, Kimo Larzelere, Melvin Hunter Jr., Carmen Goseyun **Not pictured:** Warren Morin, Marcus Bonito Sr.

From January 27 to February 13, these students treated over 5,000 acres of tribal lands in southern Florida. The Miccosukee Reservation treated 2,565 acres; Seminole Reservation completed 1,167 acres, Big Cypress Seminole Reservation completed 935 acres, and Brighton Seminole Reservation treated 1,816 acres.

These prescribed fires helped to improve pasture and grazing land for tribal residents. Fire was used as a disturbance tool to reduce the competition for invasive species and to promote new grass growth. Ultimately, these prescribed fires helped the economic sustainability of the Seminole Tribe of Florida ranching enterprises.

Excellent work to our students and many thanks to the prescribed fire mentoring program course coordinators, Eastern Region and Eastern Cherokee Agency personnel who help implement this year's program and Seminole Tribe for their partnership!



Prescribed fire on tribal lands in South Florida, 2015. The burns were conducted to reduce the competition for invasive species, and to promote the growth of native grasses. Picture by: Reese Kerbow, Eastern Region Fire Management Officer.